

Jeremy Rathburn, a graduate of Washington Elementary. He enjoys basketball, soccer, rollerblading, and trading cards, just as all kids his age do.

What sets him apart is something most kids, as well as adults, would not do.

It is so unique, in fact, that his aunt contacted our office. She said, "Jeremy is a real good boy and I'm proud of him. I thought he should be recognized." And indeed he should. Jeremy turned in \$250 that he found on the floor of McDonald's.

The Greensburg Police Department returned the money to the rightful owner and recognized Jeremy's honesty in front of his classmates.

Jeremy also received a reward from the owner of the money, a certificate from Mayor Shel Smith, and McDonald's gift certificates.

Today, we only hear about the problems surrounding the youth of society—drugs, crime, violence.

It is truly comforting to hear stories of honesty, integrity, and good deed.

Children are taught the difference between right and wrong.

Jeremy Rathburn recognized that difference and I am pleased to recognize him for his virtuous behavior. That, Mr. Speaker, concludes my report from Indiana.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members that we are trying to accommodate the gentleman from New York; however, 5-minute requests have precedence over longer special orders and within the bounds of the rules of the House, all matters are able to be discussed.

THE VANISHING AMERICAN DREAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. MASCARA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk about the vanishing American dream and what we need to do to restore that vision of hope once widely held by hard-working Americans.

It is no secret that American families today are upset and afraid of what their tomorrow's may hold. Each one of us hears their concern every time we talk with constituents back home.

Back in the 1950's and 1960's, the road to a middle-class life was clearly marked. You made your way through high school, got a job in the local mill or plant, and in 5 or 10 years, you were well on your way to a secure future for yourself and your children.

Unfortunately, that comfort level does not exist today. Despite our growing national economy, low unemployment, and increasing productivity, Americans are no longer secure in their jobs and lives.

Recent polling shows they are very afraid the ax may fall tomorrow and any day they could be handed a pink slip, losing their job, their savings, their home, their hope for tomorrow.

A recent poll I took of my own constituents puts this issue into even sharper focus. When I asked what are the top five issues facing the country and our local area, the most frequent answers from nearly 8,000 respondents were too much unemployment, a lack of fair wages, and a need for more jobs.

It is no secret that working Americans blame big corporations for many of their woes. They greatly resent the incredible salaries paid to some top executives and firmly believe that workers have lost their jobs to pay for the CEO's golden parachute.

They will tell you that being loyal to a firm and working hard no longer counts. Tomorrow you could still be out the door.

Workers know the world is not going to go back to the way things operated in the 1950's. They understand global competition and the need for American firms and workers to face the reality of the new economic order.

All they are asking for is a return to fairness, a renewal of respect for the value of hard work, and a restoration of policies that ensure workers share in the financial success of their employers.

They especially want those of us serving in Congress to hear their plea and to take action to make life better for their families.

Members on my side of the aisle recently unveiled the families first agenda which includes a variety of realistic, moderate, achievable proposals for turning this situation around.

At the top of our list of legislative proposals are several that would provide security for working families by helping to ensure they are paid fair wages, have health care coverage for their children, and are afforded greater access to portable pension plans.

We also intend to open up educational and economic opportunities by proposing tax deductions for vocational and college educations and increasing efforts to help small businesses prosper.

While corporations have been downsizing, since the late 1980's, small businesses have created millions of new jobs. Many American families dream about operating their own small businesses. We need to give them the chance to succeed.

The last major component of this plank is called responsibility. Democrats believe the Government must be responsible and balance its budget. We acknowledge individuals must be responsible and there is a need for welfare reform, and a need for increased enforcement of child support orders, and a need to prevent teen pregnancies. Importantly, we also seek corporate responsibility, ensuring pensions and the environment are protected while offering incentives to encourage businesses to be more family and worker friendly.

One portion of this agenda which I personally recommend to my leadership was a section urging development of State infrastructure banks. Millions

of miles of roads and water systems in our country are near total collapse. Every day, millions of dollars in commerce and productivity are lost forever because goods cannot be transported on our highways. Countless cities and towns across this country face a major crisis as aging water and sewer systems—many well over 100 years old—simply fail.

Before coming to Congress, I served as chair of the board of Washington County, PA commissioners for 15 years. My major focus in life was, and continues to be, economic development for southwestern Pennsylvania.

My district lost hundreds of thousands of jobs in the 1970's and 1980's as mines and steel mills closed. Several of the counties I represent are among the poorest in Pennsylvania.

So it should be no surprise that during my years as a county commissioner I worked day and night to attract new businesses to my region. Through a variety of innovative financing methods and working cooperatively with business operators, I was successful in bringing 12,000 new jobs to the county.

Since coming to Congress, I have continued to work hard for my district, promoting a number of economic development projects including construction of the Mon-Fayette Expressway, a major thoroughfare that would bring economic renewal to many areas of my district.

My point this evening is to urge that we all listen to hardworking families. We must begin to bring some of those innovative economic development tools used at the local level here to Congress.

I think if we do, we can begin to restore the faith of American workers and the American dream which should still be a reality for each and every American.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MICA] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. MICA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. WISE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

WEST MICHIGAN HAS LOW-COST, QUALITY HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor today to highlight two studies